

Stratford Planning Board

Public Hearing Minutes, Atlantic Tower Site Plan Application, Map 238 Lot 003

2023-09-19

MEMBERS PRESENT: Bill Noons; Bruce Blodgett; Ron Scott; Charles Goulet (as alternate ex officio member), Clayton Macdonald, secretary.

PUBLIC PRESENT: Brenden Gill, Michael Brauer, Woods Subdivision property owners, general public.

HEARING CALLED TO ORDER: 18:47

1. Bill gave Brenden Gill the floor to explain the project. He presented new hard copies of the application with additional materials. Public voiced their worries: impact on property values and taxes; impact on Birch Drive and its maintenance; fall zone and tower foundation adequacy; electromagnetic radiation; noise; visual impact; tower compound safety; legitimacy of the applicant company; motivations of the applicant company; appropriateness of the location; appropriateness of the service need assessment; too little benefit to too few residents of the Town; impact on historical site; whether federal and particularly State law was being adhered to; whether the Town had engaged a lawyer to assess the application and its legitimacy with the assertion that the applicant could be required to pay the legal fees. Mr Gill attempted to answer some of these concerns saying: negative impact on property values is more feared than realized; Atlantic Tower would join with other property owners to maintain the road; the tower and its foundation was professionally engineered and safe and there is no State mandated 'fall zone'; radiation levels from the tower fall far below the federal maximum; cell towers do not make noise; the compound is fenced, as required, to prevent unauthorized access; Atlantic Tower is a registered Delaware corporation and Vertex is its parent company; the location was chosen due to Verizon coverage assessment; all federal and State law is being obeyed. He also repeatedly noted that the application was for site plan review and the issues being raised did not relate to the site plan review process. Clayton also noted that the issue before the Board was for a site plan review. He said the Town had no other regulations that could be reasonably applied by the Board in considering the application. He explained that if the Board denied the application, the applicant can appeal to the Zoning Board of Adjustment and, should the ZBA agree with the Planning Board, the applicant could then take it to court.

HEARING CLOSED: Charles/Bruce, 4/0, 19:38.